



POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE

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1 INTRODUCTION

Protecting children and vulnerable young people from physical, sexual, emotional, domestic and spiritual abuse, neglect and failure to thrive should be an integral part of the policy and practice of all YMCA work. Safeguarding the welfare of children and young people should not be seen as an optional activity that can be added to the programme.

This document has been produced to enable staff and volunteers to respond in an informed and confident way to child protection issues. The policy covers all YMCA Scotland work.

Local YMCAs who do not have their own policy statement and guidelines on the protection of children and young people are encouraged to use it as a basis for developing their own policy. It is important that in adopting such a policy Management Committees and staff take the opportunity to talk through the implications and implementation of the policy and identify a suitably qualified independent person who can deal with any allegations or disclosures of abuse.

2 POLICY SCOPE

YMCA Scotland seeks to provide quality programmes aimed at physical, social, mental, spiritual and emotional development, especially for young people, to ensure their development and growth, wholeness and maturity as individuals and contribution to the wider community.

It is the duty and responsibility of all YMCA staff and volunteers to safeguard children and young people engaged in these programmes by protecting them from physical, sexual, emotional harm and neglect.

It is the duty and responsibility of the Executive Committee of YMCA Scotland to ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to protect children and young people in the care of YMCA staff and volunteers and to receive and investigate complaints surrounding physical, sexual, emotional harm or neglect being made as a result of programme work provided by YMCA Scotland staff, consultants and volunteers.

YMCA Scotland will produce information, guidance, support and an example policy based on this document, for use by local YMCA Associations.

3 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Who is this policy for?

This document covers all children and young people under the age of eighteen.

3.2 YMCA Scotland's understanding of Abuse

Abuse to children or vulnerable young people is described under the following headings:

Physical Abuse

This occurs when children are physically hurt by someone else, either deliberately or where the injury is preventable.

It includes hitting, smacking with force, shaking, burning, biting, giving a child poisonous substances or drugs or attempted drowning or smothering.

Parental Chastisement – parents can chastise their children as long as they use reasonable force. They cannot hit a child on the head, use an implement or shake a child.

Fabricated or induced illness syndrome – this form of physical abuse is where an adult induces or feigns the symptoms of an illness in a child that result in unnecessary medical intervention.

Sexual Abuse

This occurs when an adult or older young person uses a child in a way that gives that person sexual gratification and meets the person's own sexual needs. The majority of sexual abuse takes place with people known to the child and it is important to remember this with the current focus on sex offenders in the community.

It includes sexual intercourse, sodomy, fondling, rape and incest. It also includes showing children pornographic material or taking sexually explicit pictures of children. Using images of children to create pornographic material on the internet is a new phenomenon.

Sexual abuse can also take place when one child/young person abuses another to gain sexual gratification or to meet their sexual needs. In these circumstances it is important to consider each of the children being in need of protection.

'Grooming' – the internet and other technologies such as Social Networking sites have increased the availability of pictures of children being abused. It can also make children using this technology for social networking and instant messaging more vulnerable to abuse.

Emotional Abuse

This occurs when a child is persistently exposed to a lack of love and affection. It also occurs when a child is continually criticised whatever he/she tries to do or achieve. A child may also be subjected to threats or ridicule leading to the child being withdrawn and feeling unable to take part in activities.

Bullying, domestic abuse (hearing or seeing the abuse of another person) are forms of emotional abuse.

Physical neglect/emotional neglect

This occurs where adults fail to meet the basic needs of a child for food, shelter and clothing. It can include children who are consistently left without adult supervision. A child may be emotionally neglected by an adult, refusing to give the child affection and attention. Failure to ensure adequate supervision, including the use of inappropriate caregivers, is also a form of neglect. It can also include a parent who overprotects their child.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as the result of maternal substance abuse. These children are born with Neo-natal Abstinence Syndrome or Alcohol Foetal Syndrome.

There is a higher risk of neglect and all other forms of abuse where children are living in families with problem substance use.

'Substance use in itself may not have a negative impact on a parent's capacity'. It is when substance use adversely affects lifestyle, social behaviour and capacity to discharge their parental responsibilities, that it becomes a matter for concern because it adversely affects the quality of care that their child receives and poses a risk to health and development.

(Protecting Children Living in Families with Problem Substance Use'. From guidelines for Agencies in Edinburgh & the Lothian's August 2005)

Domestic Violence or Abuse

The National Strategy to Address Domestic Abuse in Scotland (2000) defines:

Domestic abuse (as gender based abuse) can be perpetrated by partners or ex partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate women and are perpetrated against their will, including rape) and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family and friends). It must be recognised that children are witness to, and may be subject to, the abuse and that there is some correlation between domestic abuse and the mental, physical and sexual abuse of children.

Although both men and women can be victimised in this way, a greater proportion of women experience all forms of domestic abuse, and are more likely to be seriously injured or killed by their partner, ex-partner or lover. Domestic abuse is not solely perpetrated by adults; domestic abuse can also be inflicted on a parent by an older child.

Domestic violence affects both adults and children within the family. Domestic violence has an impact on children in a number of ways:

- a) Children are at increased risk of physical injury during an incident, either by accident or because they attempt to intervene.
- b) Children are greatly distressed by witnessing the physical and emotional suffering of a parent.
- c) Exposure to parental conflict, even where violence is not present, can lead to serious anxiety and distress which may express itself in anti-social or criminal behaviour.
- d) Children in violent households are significantly more likely to be exposed to other forms of child abuse. Although separating from a violent partner should result in women and children being safe from harm, the danger does not automatically end. It should be recognised, that the point of leaving an abusive relationship is the time of highest risk for a victim.

Domestic abuse also affects children because it impacts on parenting capacity:

- a) A parent (in most families, the mother) may have difficulty in looking after the children when domestic violence results in injuries or, in extreme cases, death.
- b) Exposure to psychological and emotional abuse has profound negative effects on women's mental health resulting in a loss of confidence, depression, feelings of degradation, problems with sleep, isolation, and increased use of medication and alcohol. These are all factors that can restrict the mother's capacity to meet the developmental needs of her child.
- c) Belittling and insulting a mother in front of her children undermines not only her respect for herself, but also the authority she needs to parent confidently.
- d) A mother's relationship with her children may also be affected because, in attempts to avoid further outbursts of violence, she prioritises her partner's needs over those of her children.

The impact of domestic violence on children increases when directly abused, when witnessing the abuse of a parent, or colluding (willingly or otherwise) in the concealment of assaults. This constitutes abuse of children and must be reported to the authorities. No age group is particularly protected from or damaged by the impact of domestic violence. Key to the safety of women and children subjected to violence and the threat of violence is an alternative, safe and supportive residence.

Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse is not covered by the statutory definitions but is of concern both within and outside faith communities including the church. Aspects of spiritual abuse can be recognised under the four categories of abuse such as emotional abuse or physical abuse (e.g. forced healing rituals). Within faith communities, harm can be caused by the inappropriate use of religious belief or practice. This can include the misuse of the authority of leadership or penitential discipline, oppressive teaching, obtrusive or forced healing and deliverance ministries or rituals, any of which may result in children experiencing physical, emotional or sexual harm. If such inappropriate behaviour becomes harmful it should be referred for investigation in cooperation with appropriate statutory agencies.

Careful teaching, supervision and mentoring of those entrusted with the pastoral care of children should help to prevent harm occurring in this way. Other forms of harm include the denial of the right of faith or the opportunity to grow in the knowledge and love of God.

Failure to Thrive

This is where a child fails significantly to reach normal developmental or growth milestones in height, weight etc with no genetic or medical reason for this lack of growth or development. It requires medical input to identify this kind of abuse.

Other abusive behaviour towards children and young people

Within the YMCA we aim to provide a safe environment where children and young people can grow and develop. Consequently, in addition to the above very serious

forms of abuse, staff and volunteers should also be aware and on the alert for other forms of abuse. These include:

- Making reference to some physical characteristic, manner of dress or perhaps family background in a way intended to hurt
- Sarcasm
- Blatantly favouring some and excluding others
- Rejecting a member because of some negative family circumstance
- Name calling
- Abusive language and gestures
- Constant criticism
- Racism
- Sectarianism
- Gender bias

See Appendix 3 for some signs which may indicate that a child is being abused.

4 PROCEDURES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE

The National General Secretary is responsible for:

- implementation of policy through all staff and volunteers
- authorising immediate changes as a result of near misses
- adherence to the Disclosure Scotland and PVG code of practice (2011) with respect to the management of PVG Scheme Records in the recruitment of staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.

4.1 Responding to suspicion or allegation of abuse

You may have reason to believe that a child or young person has been or is being abused or there is a likelihood or risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect. This suspicion may arise from physical evidence or voluntary disclosure of information from the child/young person or another individual. It is not your responsibility to investigate your suspicions or decide where an allegation is true. It is vital that in all cases the following steps are taken:

/ **Act**

Paid members of staff and volunteers have a duty to report these suspicions or allegations to their line manager. The volunteer or staff member's first concern however must be re-assurance of the child/young person and for their protection from any potential risk. Throughout the time taken to report and respond to an incident the young person should be protected from further contact with the individual involved in an allegation.

It is important to avoid asking the young person for a full account of any incident as this can often weaken a subsequent disclosure to an appropriate individual. Staff and volunteers should also be aware of the possibility of false or malicious allegations but should take an allegation on trust unless there is substantive evidence to the contrary. The protection of the child is paramount.

If the allegation/suspicion is about their line manager or a colleague, the volunteer or staff member should report it to the National General Secretary or if the allegation is about the National General Secretary, to the Chair of National Council.

ii **Confidentiality**

Details of suspicion, allegations or disclosures should only be passed on to the line manager or the appointed person as outlined above.

Wherever possible concerns about a child or young person should not be discussed in such a way that it may lead others to suspect that they are being abused.

iii **Record information**

It is important to keep a written record of the suspicion, allegation or disclosure. This should include the date, time, facts, observations and discussion that are relevant. You must ensure that the correct name and address of the child or young person is recorded. This record should be factual. Above and beyond the facts, any opinions or personal interpretations of the facts presented can be recorded but it should be clear they are opinions, rather than facts. Records should be signed and stored in a secure place.

iv **Seek advice on referring the case**

The person to whom the information is reported has the immediate responsibility to ensure that the child/young person is safe and protected from further contact with any potential risks. The line manager should contact Social Care Direct in the relevant local authority area (follow the link <http://withscotland.org/public> enter the relevant postcode and this will guide you to the appropriate contact details) and ask to speak to the Duty Officer about a child protection issue. A report should be made using the pro forma included in Appendix 2. If the report is received during an evening then the Social Work department Emergency Duty team should be contacted.

- YMCA Scotland will provide staff with Emergency Duty Team information in the area in which they work.
- It is important not to divulge the child or young person's name
- The situation should be fully discussed with the Duty Officer and they should be asked for more advice on how to proceed and who to notify
- A note should be kept of the Duty Officer's name
- Any further action should only be taken in line with the advice given by the Social Work Department. It is important to work alongside social workers to find the best solution for the child, rather than intervene and cause even greater problems.

v **Do not investigate**

Staff and volunteers should not attempt to investigate the situation any further or interview the child or young person regarding the situation. This action could complicate a sensitive situation and interfere with evidence/ legal proceedings and cause distress to the young person.

4.2 **Responding when a child or young person discloses abuse**

It is likely that a child or young person who has been abused will have given a lot of thought as to whether they should disclose the abuse. It is highly likely that they will be nervous and afraid that they might be rejected, blamed or not believed. It is important that staff and volunteers follow the steps outlined below:

i **Stay calm** - remain calm and natural. You have been approached because you are trusted, not because you are an expert counsellor.

Do not promise to keep the information secret, you may have to inform an appropriate person. You must take any disclosure seriously and reassure the young person that there is no reason to worry.

ii **Listen** - listen to what the child or young person is saying. Give them the time and opportunity to tell you as much as they are able and willing to. Do not pressurise them and allow them to disclose information at their own pace.

Try to do this in an appropriate place as per 5 (1).

iii **Reassure** - Reassure them that what they are telling you is not their fault.

iv **Sorry** - Say that you are sorry about what happened.

v **Confidentiality** - Reiterate that you do not promise to keep the information secret. You must take any disclosure seriously.

Details of the disclosure should only be passed on to your line manager or the appointed person, who should refer the case to the appropriate authorities.

Wherever possible you should try not to discuss any concerns that you have about a child or young person in a way that may lead others to suspect that they are being abused.

vi **Take the allegation seriously** - Tell them that you are willing to help and support them. It is important that the case is referred to the Social Work department. It is up to them to take the matter further and investigate if appropriate. Under no circumstances should you investigate the disclosure.

It is important that as soon as possible after disclosure has been made you record the details as per 4.1(iii) above.

4.3 What to do in the event of an allegation of abuse being made concerning a YMCA Scotland staff member, volunteer, sessional staff member or consultant

If a concern or allegation of abuse or inappropriate conduct is made against a member of staff or volunteer, or if a staff member or volunteer has a suspicion of inappropriate conduct with young people, the National General Secretary or a member of the YMCA Scotland Senior Staff team should be contacted. If the allegation is about the National General Secretary, then the person to be contacted is the Chairman. The over-riding priority is always the safety of the young person.

Where there are grounds for suspicion of abuse, the staff member will be informed of the allegation and given the opportunity to respond.

The staff member will then normally be removed from duties that have direct contact with young people or be suspended with full pay without prejudice. This action will be taken by the YMCA Scotland National General Secretary or YMCA Scotland Chairman prior to referral of the allegation to the appropriate authorities. In all such cases YMCA Scotland will fully comply with all aspects of an external investigation and will seek to review policy and procedures on conclusion of same. In all allegations of abuse involving a member of staff or a volunteer, external support for that person will be considered.

Lack of Police or other investigatory authority action will not preclude the possibility of disciplinary action being taken with staff/volunteers if deemed appropriate in response to poor practice. Procedures will take place as per the YMCA Scotland Staff disciplinary policy.

YMCA Scotland will refer an allegation of abuse, even if the staff member or volunteer has left the employment or service of the organisation.

Where appropriate, a referral will be made to the Disqualified from Working with Children List in accordance with the Protection of Children (Scotland) Act 2003.

4.4 What to do where an incident of alleged abuse whilst under YMCA Scotland supervision is alleged

The most important priority in such incidents is to ensure the immediate safety of the child/young person who has been abused. Both abuser and victim must be kept apart. In a residential setting, it may be appropriate for the individuals to be taken home and, depending upon staffing levels, this may involve taking the whole group home. The procedure as outlined in section 4 should be followed.

Where allegations/suspicions occur where the victim and abuser are both participants in YMCA Scotland programmes, the procedure outlined in section 4 should still be followed. Such a situation will not automatically involve ceasing to work with either young person, but it may involve referring one or both parties on to another organisation.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The following recommendations have been written to safeguard paid and voluntary staff from situations that might give rise to unjustified allegations of abuse.

- 5.1 Workers should be aware of the possibility of false allegations that might arise when they meet alone with a child or young person. Where a private meeting with a lone child/young person is unavoidable it should be held in an open place in view of others or in a room visible to those outside and where a colleague has agreed to visually monitor the meeting. If a young person participates in a review of their involvement in a programme as a result of disruptive or unacceptable behaviour, it is advisable that this review is witnessed by a second staff member/volunteer.
- 5.2 Workers should not give lifts in their car to individual children or young people.
- 5.3 There should always be an appropriate ratio of adults to children/young people to ensure that:
 - a) Activities are being run safely and allow maximum participation
 - b) Disruptive behaviour can be controlled.

There should always be at least two adults present with a group who are under eighteen years of age, particularly when it is the only activity taking place on YMCA premises.

- 5.4 A group of under eighteen's should not be taken off YMCA premises with less than two adults present.
- 5.5 When working with a mixed gender group there should be staff/volunteers of both genders to manage all activities. If all staff/volunteers are of one gender, another person of the opposite gender should be designated as a contact point for members of the group.
- 5.6 Workers should treat all children and young people with respect and dignity.
- 5.7 Workers will not engage in any of the following:
 - a) Invading the privacy of children and young people when they are toileting or showering, changing or dressing unless providing necessary help to very young children maintaining same gender boundaries. Where such help is deemed necessary parental consent should first be gained.
 - b) Inappropriate physical or sexually provocative games
 - c) Sharing sleeping accommodation with an individual child or young person
 - d) Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person even in fun
 - e) Inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form
 - f) Scape-goating, ridiculing or rejecting of a child or young person.
- 5.8 Workers should not use any form of physical punishment

- 5.9 If a young person requires a review of or challenge to their behaviour as a participant in activities, this should take place privately, but in accordance with point 5 (I).
- 5.10 If staff or volunteers are engaged to work with children and young people then a general information and consent form will be required to be completed by a family member or legal guardian. This form should include emergency contact details.
- 5.11 Permission must be sought within the general information and consent form for the taking, storage and use of photos and videos, of children and young people under the age of 18
- 5.11 Staff or volunteers should not communicate or 'accept friends' with young people on private social media networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter
- 5.12 Staff or volunteers should not engage in personal text messaging or emailing with young people

6 **SELECTION PROCEDURES FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

“The single most effective point at which an organisation can use good management to minimise the possibility of abuse is when new paid staff or volunteers are appointed, although it is important to ensure that vigilance is maintained thereafter”. (1995 Smith: Protecting Children)

All recruitment of staff, volunteers, consultants and sessional staff should take place using the procedure outlined in the table in Appendix 1 and as per the YMCA Scotland Recruitment Procedure.

Responsibility for Policy –

Operational Practice: National General Secretary

Executive Responsibility: YMCA Scotland Executive Committee

ACCEPTED AS POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AT ITS MEETING ON 21 APRIL 2015

SIGNED _____ National Council Chairman

SIGNED _____ National General Secretary

This policy will be reviewed at 18 month intervals.

Appendix 1

Applications process for paid staff and volunteers working with children and young people covered by this policy as per definition in section 1.

	Paid Staff, including part time and regular sessional staff of YMCA Scotland	Volunteers engaged with YMCA Scotland	Consultants for whom we raise invoices to run individual sessions
1. Preparation of job descriptions	<p>A job description should be produced for all posts</p> <p>Each job description should be risk assessed, in order to establish whether a PVG Scheme disclosure is required for the post and whether this comes under regulated work with children and/or protected adults. This risk assessment should take into account the access that each post holder will have to children and young people. It is important that <u>all</u> staff and volunteers working face to face with children and young people should undergo a disclosure check</p> <p>When the post is advertised, the necessity of a PVG should be included in the advert.</p>		<p>Using a template, a task description/brief should be produced for all regular consultants.</p> <p>This task description /brief should be risk assessed re access to children and young people.</p> <p>Any information advertising the post should include whether a disclosure is required.</p>
2. The Applications process	A standard staff application form should be completed, which is anonymous, but coded.	A standard/customised Volunteer application form should be completed and coded.	n/a
	All posts whose risk assessment shows that a PVG Scheme Record is required, should have in their application packs an internal YMCA Scotland criminal records disclosure form and a freepost envelope. Both should be coded in line with the application form.	All posts whose risk assessment shows that a PVG Scheme Record is required should have with their application form an internal YMCA Scotland criminal record disclosure form and an envelope. This should be handed in with the application form to the staff member leading the interview.	n/a

3. The Interview Panel	Each Interview Panel should have one counter signatory on it. Counter signatories will also have had training in the area of criminal records and equal opportunities.	Volunteers should be interviewed by two people – at least one of whom should have had training in equal opportunities and disclosures.	n/a
	<p>The applications administrator should receive all free post envelopes separately. Once the short list has been made, the envelopes for those candidates should be handed over to the panel.</p> <p>If the short listing takes place in a different location to the applications administrator, arrangements should be made to ensure envelopes are confidentially passed onto the panel.</p>	n/a	n/a
4. Short listing	<p>The counter signatory should open the envelopes to see if there are any disclosures which require the panel to gain more information. This should be based on the panel agreeing that the disclosure is relevant to the post. The counter signatory should share any information verbally with other panel members.</p> <p>All other envelopes must be shredded by the applications administrator.</p>	Before the interview takes place, the lead interviewer should open the PVG Scheme disclosure form and assess if there are relevant disclosures which require more information.	n/a
5. Interview preparation	<p>The Interview panel should agree questions for any candidates regarding disclosures BEFORE the day of the interview – to allow enough time to prepare. This will enable the panel to make a fair and informed decision about the candidate. Questions should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the last offence was committed 		n/a

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether there are any outstanding charges • How the charges were received – ie the background to the offence. For example – what did the candidate do to receive a conviction for a theft • What the candidate should be asked what they would change if they were under the same circumstances again. (This is aimed at revealing attitude, taking responsibility for the offence and motivation to change) 		
6. Offering the post	<p>Once candidates have been interviewed, the panel can decide to whom they wish to offer the post, subject to a formal PVG scheme check.</p> <p>If the candidate has a PVG disclosure an update with CRBS must be completed</p>	<p>Once the candidate has been interviewed, the panel can confirm or reject their application to volunteer, subject to a formal PVG scheme check. If the candidate has a PVG disclosure an update with CRBS must be completed</p>	n/a
7. Disclosures procedure	<p>The Counter Signatory on the panel will contact the candidate and ask them to complete a PVG form. No firm offer can be made until the form has been returned to the YMCA from CRBS.</p>	<p>A Counter Signatory will contact the candidate and ask them to complete a PVG form. No confirmation of volunteering can be made until the form has been returned to the YMCA from CRBS.</p>	<p>A Counter Signatory will contact the consultant and ask them to complete a PVG form. No access to groups can take place until the form has been returned to the YMCA from CRBS.</p>
	NB The taking up of references for all posts still applies.		
	<p>If the form is returned with additional information, the Counter Signatory must recommend either yes, no or re-interview the candidate. The Counter Signatory can not discuss information from the PVG with other panel members.</p> <p>If the Counter Signatory is not sure how to proceed, they can discuss the matter with another Counter Signatory or the Lead Signatory.</p> <p>In the event of a candidate being re-interviewed, the Counter Signatory MUST NOT discuss disclosure information with either the panel or the candidate. If the panel is still unsure, it is possible to approach Disclosure Scotland for guidance.</p>		<p>If the form is returned with information relevant to the work the counter signatory must recommend whether to engage the consultant or not.</p> <p>The counter signatory MUST NOT discuss PVG Scheme Membership information with the consultant</p>

8. Final decision	A final decision can be made to either confirm the appointment, or to confirm that the appointment will not take place. If the decision not to appoint has been made on the basis of PVG Scheme Membership information, the candidate should be referred to Disclosure Scotland. PVG Scheme Membership information MUST NOT be discussed with the candidate.		
	In the event of the appointment not taking place, the interview panel can decide to offer the post to another suitable candidate (continue from point 6), or re-advertise the post (continue from point 1).	In the event of the volunteer not being appointed, the panel should tell the volunteer. It may be appropriate to re-advertise the post.	In the event of the consultant not being offered work, the Counter Signatory should either tell them directly, or inform the staff member for whom the work would be taking place.
	Internal Criminal Records disclosure Information should be kept with other interview notes in the Personnel files for six months, then shredded.	Internal Criminal Records disclosure information should be kept with other interview notes in a locked and secure place for six months, then shredded.	Internal Criminal Records disclosure information should be kept with other interview notes in a locked and secure place for six months, then shredded.
All Disclosure Information will be kept as per the Storage and Handling of Information policy			

Appendix 2
Responding to concerns about a child or young person (See section 4.1)

- Take the allegation seriously; support the child – do not investigate
- Where the information is unclear, only ask enough questions to gain basic information
- Use open-ended questions, **do not** use leading questions
- The report should be handed to their line manager in a sealed envelope
- The Line manager should contact the Social work dept

Remember

- do no prompt or suggest
- do not ask the child how they felt
- record, sign and date the form
- If in any doubt – seek advice

Child/Young Person's Name:
When did it happen?
Where did it happen?
Who did it?
What happened?
Signature
Designation
Date

Follow up action taken by line manager

Signature

Designation

Date

Appendix 3

SOME SIGNS WHICH MAY INDICATE THAT A CHILD IS BEING ABUSED

1 Physical Abuse

- Improbable excuses for injuries (from child or parent/carer)
- Unexplained injuries or burn
- Bite marks
- Pattern of bruising
- Untreated injuries
- Excessive physical punishment
- Arms and legs covered in hot weather
- Frightened around parent/carer
- Aggression
- Crying/putting up a fight when it's time to go home

But need to consider other possible reasons.....

- Genuine accidental injuries
- Blood disorder
- Mongolian blue spot
- Skin disorder
- Brittle bones

2 Physical Neglect

- Constant hunger
- Poor personal hygiene
- Constant tiredness
- Poor state of clothing
- Unexplained absences-frequent lateness
- Untreated medical problems
- Low self-esteem/poor peer relationships
- Stealing/taking food

But need to consider other possible reasons....

- Parental poverty
- Poor housing
- Parental illness

3 Emotional Abuse

- Low self-esteem
- Indiscriminate affection
- Clinginess
- Sudden speech disorder
- Significant decline in concentration
- Neurotic behaviour – rocking, head-banging
- Becoming 'parental' towards other children
- Delayed physical or emotional development

- Continuing to have regular temper tantrums
- Compulsive stealing
- Extreme passivity/aggression

But need to consider other possible reasons.....

- Parental separation
- Serious illness of someone in the family
- Death of a significant adult or child in the family/community

4 Sexual Abuse

- Lack of trust in adults
- Fear of a particular individual
- Withdrawn
- Sleep disturbances
- Reluctance or refusal to take part in physical activity or to change clothes for games
- Low self-esteem
- Sexual knowledge or curiosity beyond child's years
- Unusual interest in other people's genitals
- Fear of bathrooms or closed doors
- Sexual drawings
- Problems with peer relationships
- Sexually inappropriate/harmful behaviours
- Stealing
- Compulsive masturbation
- Excessive money

Some physical/medical signs

- Sleeplessness, nightmares, fear of the dark
- Bruises, scratch marks, bites
- Eating disorder
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Pain, itching, bleeding or bruising around the genital area
- Soiling or wetting in previously continent children

But need to consider other possible reasons.....

- Other, non-abusive events e.g. birth of sibling
- Urinary tract infection